



THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL

THE PROMISE OF TOMORROW

"FROM THE POWER OF THE LIONS" By Rachmiel Frydland

September 1, 1939 was a beautiful day in Warsaw, Poland. I was walking along Nowolipki Street, heading toward the Jewish business district, when the big rooftop sirens began to wail. "Another air raid test," I thought. A half-block farther on, I heard the drone of airplane engines and then the heart-stopping roar of exploding bombs. Warsaw was under attack by German bombers. World War II had begun.

I quickly took shelter in a nearby house, but not for long. Where could Polish citizens, especially those who were Jewish find protection from the advancing Nazi juggernaut? Little did I realize then that behind the swiftly advancing phalanxes of the German military machine were the Nazi weapons of slave labor, starvation, torture and murder for the so-called "inferior races."

European Jews have seldom enjoyed complete freedom, but there was no hint of the approaching holocaust while I was growing up in a tiny forest village near Chelm, Poland. It was during the years following World War I, and my father eked out a living for our family of seven by buying fruits, vegetables and animals from peasant farmers and selling them to the townspeople.

Becoming A Rabbinical Student

I progressed rapidly in my religious studies with the village teachers, so my proud father sent me, his

only son, to a Jewish Yeshiva in Chelm. I was nine years old when I entered. For four years I studied for the best part of the day and was well prepared when time came for my bar mitzvah. My father soon decided that I was ready for rabbinical school, and off I went to Warsaw, the capital.

As I studied, perturbing questions began to creep into my thinking. Like small barriers at first, they began to loom larger. Were the Gentiles as terrible as my teachers said? Why did Christians follow the teachings of our Jewish prophets? Must the school discipline be so strict and unfeeling?

A growing rebellion stirred within me. Gradually, without realizing it, I moved away from a rabbinical career. First I left the highly regarded rabbinical seminary which I was attending for one which was less rigid. Then I shifted again to another one with still more freedom. Encountering some financial difficulties, I began to sell clothing items in the street to earn money. This completely disqualified me for rabbinical training.

At seventeen, I was on my own in Warsaw. Looking for a place to stay, I was taken in by a Jewish tailor and his family. I soon learned that they were visiting a meeting hall where Gentile Christians were seeking to convert Jews. My new friends encouraged me to go with them.

They said that I could help them answer the missionaries' claim that Jesus was really the Messiah of the Jewish people. I agreed to go.

Arguing With A Preacher

After the meeting, I talked with the preacher. He read several passages from the Old Testament that he said were prophecies about the long awaited Messiah of Israel. I could give contradictory interpretations for all but one of the passages: Daniel 9:24-26, which told of the Messiah's strange departure from Jerusalem. Since I had not studied the Book of Daniel, I consulted Jewish commentaries. I found very little information on the passage in question and none of it seemed reasonable to me. The passage which perplexed me reads as follows:

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and the prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And

after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself.

This declaration raised many questions, but the one which puzzled me most was: **"Why was Messiah to be cut off?"** Further study and reflection caused my ready-made answers to melt away. I realized that my objections were based mostly upon what others had taught me and not upon my own unprejudiced study of the Bible. The prophetic promises which appeared to be fulfilled in Jesus were too numerous to be explained away. As I admitted these things to myself, I determined to read the New Testament to find out about this Jesus.

A Great Discovery

I obtained a copy of the New Testament in Hebrew. As I read, I compared carefully the many references I found in it to the Tenach (Old Testament). Slowly and clearly it began to dawn upon me that the New Testament was a continuation of the Old Testament. I reasoned that if the Jewish Scriptures are true, the Christian Scriptures are also true. From this it followed that Jesus must be my Messiah.

At first I lacked courage to admit that I had been wrong and to confess what I now believed. One evening in 1937 I sat in a meeting composed wholly of Jewish people who professed Jesus as the Messiah. The speaker was a Gentile woman who spoke compellingly and with great understanding about the Temple of Jerusalem. She traced its great significance for the faith of Israel, showing that its appointments and structure were divine object lessons, pointing to man's sinful condition and God's provision for forgiveness, culminating in the sacrifice of the Messiah for the forgiveness of sins. **So, that was why Messiah had to be cut off, as Daniel had foretold!** "How is it," I asked myself, "that a Gentile woman knows more about the Bible and its significance than I, a student of a Yeshiva?" At that very meeting I dropped to my knees in prayer and asked Messiah Jesus to become my Saviour. There was a wonderful sense of the forgiveness of sins and

a granting of courage to confess Messiah openly.

I had been a believer for two years when the war came. Warsaw shook under more and more bombs. Food became scarce and the electricity and water supply failed. Along with several other young Jewish believers in the Messiah, I went to help defend the city. Because I did not want to use a gun, I was given physical work. Within a month the city was crushed and the triumphant Germans marched in.

A Taste of Nazi Brutality

I decided to leave the city and seek farm work with friends to the north. With a certificate in hand, given to me by my pastor, I set out across the burning city. Reaching the outskirts, I was stopped by a soldier. "Are you a Jew?" he demanded. Without a word, I handed him my certificate. He looked at it and then spat out: "Yes, but you are **still a Jew!**" He seized a shovel and slammed it into my back, knocking me into a ditch. There I was ordered to join fellow Jews who were digging graves for dead horses. It was my first taste of Nazi brutality, but actually mild in comparison with what awaited so many others.

That night I escaped in the darkness and resumed my journey. My friends received me gladly and fed me, but in a short time the new restrictive laws against Jews forced me to leave. Returning to Warsaw, I discovered that one of my sisters had died of typhus and that a wall had been built around the Jewish section. I decided to walk the 150 miles southeast to my native village. Jews were not allowed to travel any longer on public vehicles.

Home Again

My parents could hardly believe I was still alive when I arrived in mid-December. One of my sisters also returned home, and we settled down, hoping to wait out the war. We knew, however, that our blue-and-white armbands, marking us as Jews, were a constant hazard to our lives. I was forced to work with slave laborers, building a road, but managed to escape when starvation swept the camp. Home again, my mother told me that I must stop telling

my Jewish friends about the Messiah. But the spreading pall of suffering and death caused people to reach out for some hope or answer for the dreaded future.

One day my sister came to me. "I read your Bible," she said, "and I heard your discussions. I believe, and if God gives us peaceful days, I want to be baptized." My mother came to me and said, "I have watched you and you are a different person. I was reading your New Testament and I don't see anything wrong in this Jesus. Why are our rabbis so much against Him?" My father never admitted anything to me. However, he stopped hiding my Bible and rebuking me for speaking about Jesus. He began secretly to read the Bible.

The blossoming faith of my family was a great blessing to me as death drew nearer in 1942. We saw trucks and trains loaded with Jewish people rolling toward the extermination camp at Sobibor. One by one and village by village they disappeared. My father, my mother, my sisters, my newly wedded wife, and all other relatives except a brother-in-law perished. At the end of August the order came for me to go. I was given permission by the mayor of our village to say goodbye to my parents, who at that time had not yet been called. I fled to the woods, and though time and again I was captured, by miracle after miracle God enabled me to survive.

Alone In The Woods

Once, alone in the woods in the biting cold of winter, exhausted and discouraged, my whole being seemed to cry out: "Why are we so persecuted?" I was convinced that the companions who had been with me just days before had been caught, and lived no more. I, too, was ready to die. But there still remained the Lord, the same yesterday and today. He began to speak to me. "You have enough of my grace. Had not Job enough? Had not Paul enough?" The still small voice of God spoke softly to me. Overcome with tears, I yielded and decided to live as long as the Lord would allow me to live, and to work for Him. Confident that God was with me, I rose up and left those woods.

As I moved from place to place, Gentile Christians often risked their lives by hiding and feeding me. One of my bitterest experiences, however, was the discovery that many German Christians, though they knew of the Nazi atrocities against the Jews, would not help. "It is our government, and we must obey," they said.

In The Warsaw Ghetto

In late 1944, by hiding in cemeteries, deserted churches, and the homes of fearful friends, I was one of the few surviving Jews in Warsaw outside the ghetto. In that enclosure were 5,000 Jews, the last of Warsaw's original 500,000. By God's enabling, I secretly slipped into the ghetto and was able to speak comfort to a few of the Hebrew Christians still alive. Other Jewish brethren heard the message and believed in Messiah Jesus. My friends in the ghetto insisted that I leave. They said that if God had preserved me thus far, I would be a witness to the woes they now experienced. At the end of the war, I could tell the story of their suffering. I was probably one of the last to leave the ghetto. It was only shortly afterward that the Germans obliterated the entire camp.

Time seemed to drag slowly. There were nights when a Christian family would risk their lives by sheltering a Jew. Once, in the shop of a Christian undertaker, I slept in a coffin. There were other times when a barn provided my shelter. In all that time there was the assurance that God wanted me to live. As long as He wanted it, I was ready. And finally the day came when I was no longer hunted and condemned for being a Jew. In January of 1945, Russian troops entered Warsaw and the automatic death sentence for Jews was lifted.

After the war I left Poland and went to England to study. With my training behind me, I came to the United States to share in a witness for Messiah among my own people. Then, for four years I lived in Israel, serving as a pastor to Israeli believers in Messiah and sharing my witness with my brethren there. In Israel I met my wife, who is also a Jewish believer in the Messiah. She had suffered through the Nazi occupation of France and had survived to immigrate to Israel. We now live with our children in Canada where I share my witness with my brethren there.

What My Heart Feels

Words fail to describe what my heart feels. Awed by the power and greatness of the God of Daniel, King Darius wrote a decree to his dominions which perhaps describes best the awe and reverence that I feel for what God has done for me:

... for He is The living God, enduring forever; His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and His dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues, He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, He who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.

(Daniel 6:26-27).

From my harrowing experience, I see that men who reject Messiah are capable of bringing hell on earth. But surely God has not abandoned mankind. He has a plan for every person who will trust Him. The Bible, which has guided and sustained me thus far, promises that peace and justice will fill the earth only when the Prince of Peace returns. He is the only hope of mankind, and I know that He will come, because He has proved His great love and His miraculous power to me. Will you not also trust Him?

(Adapted from Mr. Frydland's life story: *I Escaped From The Nazis* and used by permission.)



WHAT OUGHT A JEW TO BELIEVE?

By Daniel Goldberg

May I ask you a question—as a Jew, what do you believe? Having been born in an Orthodox Jewish home in Los Angeles I would like to share with you what I believe, as a Jew, and what I'm convinced Jewish people ought to believe.

First, it seems highly reasonable that a Jew ought to believe that it is an honor and a privilege to be a Jew. At a point of time in history God chose Israel and ever since then He has identified Himself with the Jewish people. Moses tells us this in Deuteronomy 7:6:

For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession,

above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.

Moses also said in Deuteronomy 7:14.

Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples, . . .

Obviously then, it is an honor and a privilege to be a Jew. In Biblical days when God addressed Himself to the world, He did so through the prophets of Israel. To the wicked city of Nineveh God sent Jonah, the Jew. Jeremiah had a lot to say to Egypt, and every Jew attending Sunday School knows how the Lord used the Hebrew prophet, Daniel, to speak to the King of Babylon. What an honor and privilege it is to be a Jew!

And what is your attitude toward the Scriptures? Certainly if anyone should believe in and propagate the message of the Scriptures it is the Jew. In fact, the Jew and the Scriptures are inseparable. David's attitude is beautifully expressed in Psalm 119:97, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Isaiah pointed out the essential nature of God's law and testimony in chapter 8, verses 16 and 20, where he says, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples . . . To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely because there is no morning for them." And it was Moses who indicated in Deuteronomy 8:3, that

"... man doth not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live."

After all, who gave the Bible to the world? Was it not the Jew? It is not enough to wrap the tefillin around one's hand and place them close to one's heart and on one's forehead. These signs and symbols indeed represent the preciousness of the Word of God. But how much more ought the Jew to be familiar with the Scriptures, to believe them with the whole heart, and to propagate their message. Through the centuries it was the Jewish people who paid with their lives for the preservation of the Scriptures. Every person in his right mind, must thank the Jew for the Bible which has been transmitted by him to the world.

Finally, let me suggest very strongly that a Jew should believe in God's Messiah, God's Anointed One. The wise Jew has learned that man is not going to work out all his problems and establish a utopia by himself. Nor will the United Nations solve all man's problems. God must send the Messiah back to earth to accomplish what man through his selfishness and greed can never accomplish. It was concerning the city of Jerusalem that the Prophet Ezekiel cried out,

A ruin, a ruin, a ruin will I make it. This also shall be no more until He come whose right it is, and I will give it Him.

(Ez. 21:32, Jewish Publication Society Bible).

The person of whom Ezekiel was speaking is none other than Messiah, the Prince of Peace. And what a ruin Jerusalem has been through the ages because the Messiah has not been there to rule. One day the Prince of Peace will come and bring peace to this troubled area. What a ruin also is the individual human heart with tormenting fears and the human mind with anxieties until Messiah Jesus comes to settle down in that life. For a Jew without a Messiah and Redeemer is incomplete. That's why Isaiah the Prophet pleads the reasonableness of faith in this One who alone can atone for our sins, saying in chapter one, vs. 18,

Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

In conclusion then the Jew ought to believe three very important matters: first, that it is a high honor and unique privilege to be a Jew; secondly, that it is essential for Jews to believe in and propagate their Scriptures; and thirdly, that Jesus the Messiah is a real, living divine personality, the anointed One of God, who came the first time to atone for our sins and will some day come again to the city of Jerusalem, and there execute a reign of peace and righteousness for the entire world.

WHAT IS BETH SAR SHALOM?

By Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

The Beth Sar Shalom Fellowship is, as its name implies, a Jewish Fellowship, but not in the sense the term is normally used today. This particular fellowship is part of the Hebrew Christian movement, which is composed of Jewish people who, through the study of Scripture, have become convinced that Jesus of Nazareth is the Jewish Messiah, and have become believers in Him.

On various occasions, therefore, these Jewish believers come together and are joined by Gentile believers for Bible study and discussion. A standing invitation is always extended to all Jewish people who would like to visit with us and study the claims of Jesus in the Jewish context.

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